

ABSTRACT

RESEARCH PAPER: What We Talk About When and Where We Talk About Death:
Some Cultural and Linguistic Functions of Obituaries in Modern American Culture

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This study examines some of the cultural and linguistic roles of 21st century American obituaries published between August and December 2010 in several major American newspapers. This study highlights how the modern obituary continues to influence our perceptions of death as well as how we idealize certain personal and social values for the betterment of society. This study also examines and categorizes the six most common types of metaphors for death and the euphemisms mainstream American culture uses to discuss the act of dying in the written public space of newspaper obituaries.